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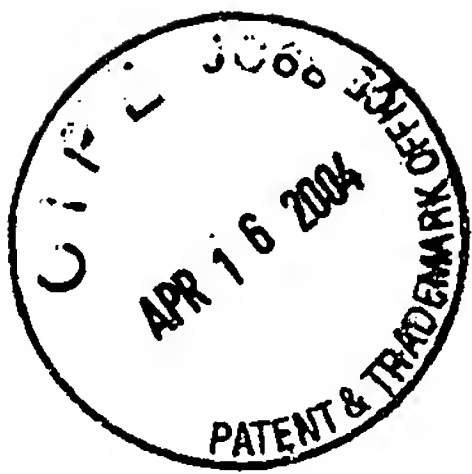
TRANSMITTAL FORM (to be used for all correspondence after initial filing)	Application Number	10/605,294	
	Filing Date	September 19, 2003	
	First Named Inventor	Johnson, John E.	
	Group Art Unit	3643	
	Examiner Name	Price, Jr. Richard Thomas	
Total Number of Pages in This Submission	3	Attorney Docket Number	717119.455

ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fee Transmittal Form	<input type="checkbox"/> Assignment Papers (for an Application)	<input type="checkbox"/> After Allowance Communication to Group
<input type="checkbox"/> Fee Attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Board of Appeals and Interferences
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment / Reply	<input type="checkbox"/> Licensing-related Papers	<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Group (Appeal Notice, Brief, Reply Brief)
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<input type="checkbox"/> Affidavits/declaration(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Petition to Convert to a Provisional Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Status Letter
<input type="checkbox"/> Extension of Time Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney, Revocation Change of Correspondence Address	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Enclosure(s) (please identify below); return postcard
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<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts/ Incomplete Application	Remarks:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts under 37 CFR 1.52 or 1.53		

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT	
Firm or Individual Name	Mark E. Stallion, Reg. No. 46,132 Blackwell Sanders Peper Martin LLP
Signature	
Date	April 16, 2004

CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAILING			
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as Express Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this date: April 16, 2004 Express Mail Label No.: EV390580689			
Typed or printed name	Annette Blomes		
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PATENT
717119.455

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application of: Johnson, John E.	:	Examiner: Price, Jr. Richard Thomas
	:	
Serial No.: 10/605,294	:	Group Art Unit: 3643
	:	
Filed: September 19, 2003	:	Attorney Docket No.: 717119.455
	:	
For: AUTOMATED CLASSIFIER AND MEAT CUT FAT TRIMMING METHOD AND APPARATUS	:	Customer No.: 27128
	:	
	:	Confirmation No.: 2293
	:	
Last Office Action: April 6, 2004	:	

RESPONSE

Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Responsive to the Restriction Requirement dated April 6, 2004, Applicant hereby elects for prosecution at this time Group I claims 1-14, drawn to an apparatus. The election of Group I claims is made with traverse without prejudice to the elected Group I claims and without prejudice to the non-elected Group II claims.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the requirement for restriction are respectfully requested. The Applicant contends that Group I and II claims are closely related and have a common utility. Specifically, the image capturing system and method are closely related and can have a common utility. The Applicant further contends that the Group I and II claims don't pose a serious burden for the examiner by requiring two separate searches.

Application of: Johnson, John E.
Serial No.: 10/605,294
Response

Because Applicant may wish to pursue claims of the non-elected Group at a later date by Divisional Application, if necessary, it is requested that these claims, pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142, be permitted to remain in the application.

This response does not present any new matter. Accordingly, as all requirements of the Action have been complied with, an action on the merits and a Notice of Allowance are hereby respectfully solicited.

If any issue regarding the allowability of any of the pending claims in the present application could be readily resolved, or if other action could be taken to further advance this application such as an Examiner's amendment, or if the Examiner should have any questions regarding the present amendment, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner please telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney in this regard.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 16, 2004



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